

Opening Statement of Mary Elaine Spears

When I met Bob back in 1988, I had been widowed for 8 years. I had raised 3 teenage boys while working as a sales rep. covering the eastern half of the U.S. I was independent and I wasn't interested in marriage; that is until Bob came charging into my life. What a breath of fresh air! A strong man full of confidence, moral, honest, and with love for his children, his friends & his country. Bob pursued me like he did everything else in life - full speed ahead & doesn't let anything stand in the way of the goal. On top of that he had a boyish, sincere innocence. He wanted to believe that people were honest & good. I'd never met any one like him. He didn't know how to play games especially when it came to love & commitment. He was so blatantly honest about his feelings I feared for his nativity. Commitment was his middle name and he wasn't one bit shy about it. Little did I know that the very things I admired about him would cause a wall between us several years later. It was one thing to be fearlessly committed to God, family, friends, business & country. To have that same perseverance to "righting our country's ills" was another story.

The trouble began when when Bob had come in contact with information that our income tax, that he had dutifully paid for 40 years, had been put in place without legal due course. This sent Bob on a diligent quest to verify the information & verify it he did. Information flowed in from all parts of the country that convinced

him, without a shadow of doubt, that he wasn't liable to pay income tax. He believed that the facts spoke for themselves & felt morally obligated to share this information with others. He was willing to stand in defense of his fellow Americans. As he shared the information with others, Bob quickly came to understand that even though they believed the same information that Bob believed. They were afraid to confront the issue. No wonder? All one has to do is read, watch TV, listen to radio or attend movies, where time and time again the abuses of government are documented, to understand why fear, & helplessness had permeated our society. On top of that his own wife was frightened. There was no way I could go along with his wild dream of being able to confront the system. Many dark days followed. I contacted attorneys, cpa's, government representative & even a political journalist trying to find information to help show my husband another perspective. Unfortunately no such help was forthcoming. I struggled with my own alternatives. The easy thing to do would be to seek divorce, but I knew I did not want to end my marriage. I made a vow for richer for poorer, for better for worse, in sickness & in health, till death do us part. What I decided to do was to file a separate tax return even though I had no income and owed to tax. I was reprimanded by the IRS for filing a "frivolous" return and fined \$500. I was able to get that straightened out by telling them that I was attempting to separate my actions from that of my husband. My filing separately caused Bob to feel betrayed by me. I was able to convince him that I was neither betraying him or issuing an ultimatum, but rather I just was unable to partner in his actions. I also told him I was not going to do anything to prevent him from

pursuing what he felt was “right”. Marriage did not give me license to be in charge of my husband’s convictions or he mine. I had done all I knew how to bring information to the table for Bob to consider. I had no solid evidence and very little information. It was time for me to let it go and continue to love him through the process. Nothing was solved but an uneasy peace returned to our relationship. It was during this time Bob & I become heavily involved in Bible study & it was in the context of God’s understanding that Bob realized the error of his zeal. Our zeal for righteousness needs to start within our own hearts. We cannot change others only ourselves. Each individual will have the opportunity to change. As we change or do not change our entire environment changes.

Thank you for the opportunity today to give some understanding and hope to others that have become involved in fruitlessness of the lies within the tax protest movement. Our world can change but first it must change within you. God bless you and bring you peace.